

Policy: Care Planning for Children in Care

Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the legislative requirements for undertaking care planning for a child in the care of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Use of interpreters

An interpreter must be provided for any individual who does not have a sufficient understanding of English, so they can meaningfully participate in care planning discussions. Refer to the [Interpreters Practice Guidelines](#) for information about how to determine if a person requires an interpreter and how to arrange one.

Policy Statement

The Care and Protection of Children Act (2007) (the Act) gives Territory Families the statutory responsibility of safeguarding and monitoring the wellbeing of children who are in the care of the CEO.

Every child in care must have a comprehensive written Care Plan that identifies the case direction, their needs, the actions to be taken to meet their needs, decisions about placement arrangements, and contact between the child and their family or other significant people in their life.

Care Plans must be developed in a way that encourages and facilitates the participation of the child, their parents, their Carer, professionals who are involved to support the child and their family. For an Aboriginal child, Aboriginal people and agencies must be included. Information must be provided to all the participants in a timely way to support their effective participation.

The Care Plan must be recorded on the 'My Care Plan' template document located in CCIS.

Where the case direction of the child's Care Plan is reunification, the parents' needs and actions to address the safety concerns must be recorded on the 'My Parent Plan' template document located in CCIS. The Parent Plan must be reviewed every three months while the case direction continues to be reunification.

A copy of the Care Plan must be filed with an application to the Court for a Protection Order or Permanent Care Order. If a copy of the care plan is not filed with the application then the Care Plan must be filed with the Court within three weeks.

Interim Care Plan (s76 of the Act)

As soon as possible after a child enters the care of the Chief Executive Officer an Interim Care Plan must be prepared and implemented. The Interim Care Plan must:

- be written on the template 'My Care Plan';
- identify the child's immediate needs and the actions required to meet those needs;
- include the placement information; and
- set out the contact arrangements between the child, their parents, siblings, family or any other significant persons in their life.

Care Plan (s70 of the Act)

Within three weeks of a child entering the care of the CEO, a Care Plan must be prepared and implemented. The Care Plan must:

- be written on the template 'My Care Plan';
- include the overall Care Plan goal of either reunification or permanency;
- identify the child's needs and the actions required to meet those needs across the life domains;
- be prepared in consultation with family, where appropriate;
- include the views and wishes of the participants expressed during the development of the Care Plan, the decisions made, and brief rationales for decisions;
- include the placement information;
- set out the contact arrangements between the child, their parents, siblings, family or any other significant persons in their life;
- include a proposal to meet cultural and identity requirements for the child;
- outline the arrangements for the Case Manager or third party contact with the child to monitor their safety and wellbeing; and
- be documented in a way that is cognisant of the child, family and community's language and cultural needs.

Review of the Care Plan (s74 of the Act)

Within two months of a child entering the care of the CEO, and every six months thereafter, the Care Plan must be reviewed. The review must:

- be written on the template 'My Care Plan';
- be prepared in consultation with family, where appropriate; and
- include the views and wishes of the participants expressed during the review, the decisions made, and brief rationale for decisions.

The Care Plan must also be reviewed immediately after

- the death of a parent or carer of the child;
- a change of placement arrangement for the child;
- an extension or variation of a protection order;
- there is a significant change in the child's circumstances, such as significant medical diagnoses, or significant circumstances arise in relation to the care and welfare of the child.

Modification of the Care Plan (s71 of the Act)

The Care Plan may be modified at any time that the CEO or their delegate considers appropriate, for example, when new information emerges or events occur that have an effect on the planning decisions for the child.

The Care Plan must be modified if the child is about to leave the care of the CEO. Refer to [Procedure: Transition to Independence](#). This requirement also applies when a child is leaving the care of the CEO under Permanent Care Order. Refer to [Procedure: Care Planning for Permanent Care Orders](#).

Child's views must be taken into account (s72 of the Act)

Section 72 of the Act requires the views and wishes of a child be taken into account when preparing, reviewing or modifying a Care Plan, as appropriate in the circumstances. The Viewpoint self-assessment questionnaire tool is a software program that supports the participation of children in care in the development of their Care Plan.

Provision of Care Plan to interested parties (s73 of the Act)

Within two weeks of the Care Plan having been prepared, reviewed or modified, the Care Plan must be given to:

- the child;
- each parent of the child;
- the carer of the child;
- proposed permanent carer (where appropriate); or
- any other person considered by the CEO to have a direct and significant interest in the wellbeing of the child.

Provision of the Care Plan to specific parties (e.g. parents) may be waived when it is considered to be inappropriate or impracticable in the circumstances having regard to the wishes of the child, any risk of harm to the child, or any other matter the CEO considers relevant.

Legislative Basis and Related Documents

[Care and Protection of Children Act \(2007\)](#) Sections 69 to 76

Authorised by:

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